

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

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TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT WEGMANS FOOD MARKET

Planning Board Meeting of April 24, 2008

File No./Petitioner:

SDP-07-131, Wegmans Food Markets, Inc.

Project Name:

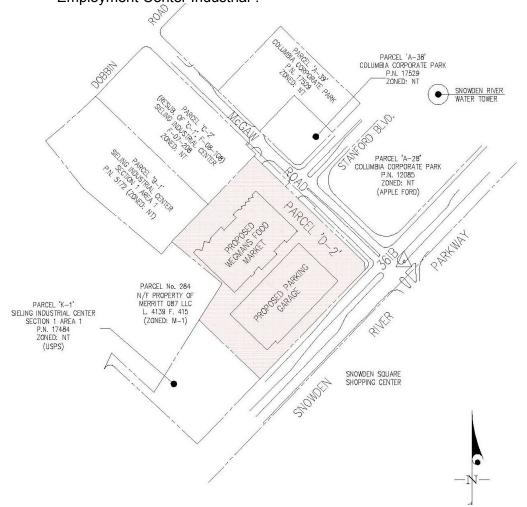
Wegmans Food Market, Columbia Sieling Industrial Center, Section 1, Area 1, Parcel "D-2"

Request:

The request is for approval to amend the previously approved Site Development Plan (SDP) to adjust the maximum building height requirement from 50 feet to 92.07 feet for a clock tower structure which serves as an architectural building feature for the Wegmans Food Market grocery store in accordance with Section 125.E.4.d of the Howard County Zoning Regulations.

Location:

The subject property, Parcel "D-2" is located on the northwest corner of Snowden River Parkway and McGaw Road, identified as Parcel No. 356 on Tax Map 36, Grid No. 24 in the Sixth Election District of Howard County, Maryland. The property contains approximately 12.2 acres of land zoned "New Town - Employment Center Industrial".



Site History:

Please refer to the previous Planning Board staff report for the Wegmans Food Market dated January 3, 2008 for a summary of the site history. SDP-07-131 for the subject property was presented to the Planning Board at a public meeting on January 3, 2008 and approved by the Planning Board at their work session on January 31, 2008.

Legal Notice:

The subject property was properly posted with two (2) official Planning Board notices with the date, time and place of this meeting for 15 consecutive days prior to this public meeting, one at the entrance along McGaw Road and one along Snowden River Parkway as verified by DPZ staff.

Adjustment Request:

This SDP is in compliance with all applicable requirements of FDP-117-A-II, except for the height of the proposed clock tower. The proposed height for the clock tower requires approval from the Planning Board for a height adjustment beyond the 50' height requirement. There is a 50' height limitation for structures located within this phase of the Sieling Industrial Center of Columbia. However, FDP-117-A-II allows the Planning Board design flexibility for the building height by stating the following, "structures may be constructed to any height provided it is shown on an SDP approved by the Planning Board". The proposed food market is a two-story 40'-8" high structure with a 92.07' high clock tower designed as an architectural building feature that represents the Wegmans Food Market.

Additionally, Section 6C-2 of FDP-117-A-II contains a provision that any structure exceeding twenty (20) feet in height shall be set back from any public road right-of-way an additional one foot for each additional foot of building height in excess of twenty (20) feet. The proposed clock tower complies with that setback criteria as the grocery store will be located approximately 370 feet from the Snowden River Parkway right-of-way and is visually separated from the road by the proposed adjoining garage structure. The store is setback approximately 118 feet from the McGaw Road right-of-way at its closest point where the clock tower is located at the northeast corner of the building.

Evaluation and Conclusions:

In accordance with Section 125.E.4.d of the Zoning Regulations, the requested building height adjustment shall be evaluated and granted if the Planning Board finds that the following two criteria items are satisfied:

1. The adjustment will not alter the character of the neighborhood or area in which the property is located, will not impair the appropriate use or development of adjacent property, and will not be detrimental to the public welfare.

Granting the requested waiver will not impair the appropriate use or development of the surrounding properties which are also zoned "New Town - Employment Center Industrial and will not be detrimental to the public interests. The height of the clock tower will not change the character of the area because the surrounding properties are existing developed employment use sites. For informational purposes and comparative analysis, the existing DPW water tower located in the immediate vicinity of the site adjacent to Snowden River Parkway is 163 feet in height.

2. The adjustment is needed due to practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships which arise in complying strictly with the Final Development Plan and/or results in a better design than would be allowed by strict compliance with the development criteria.

In support of this height adjustment request, the applicant states that the additional clock tower height is necessary to achieve the standard visual recognition of the Wegmans Food Market and results in a better architectural design than would be achieved by strict compliance with the development criteria. The clock tower has become a standard integral design feature contributing to the store's main street architectural appearance.

Recommendation:

Based on the above findings, the Department of Planning and Zoning recommends that the Planning Board approve the requested height adjustment for the clock tower building feature for the proposed Wegmans Food Market, subject to the following condition:

1. The height adjustment shall apply solely to the clock tower feature as depicted on the site plan and architectural plan exhibits and not to any other structure, building feature or use on the subject property.

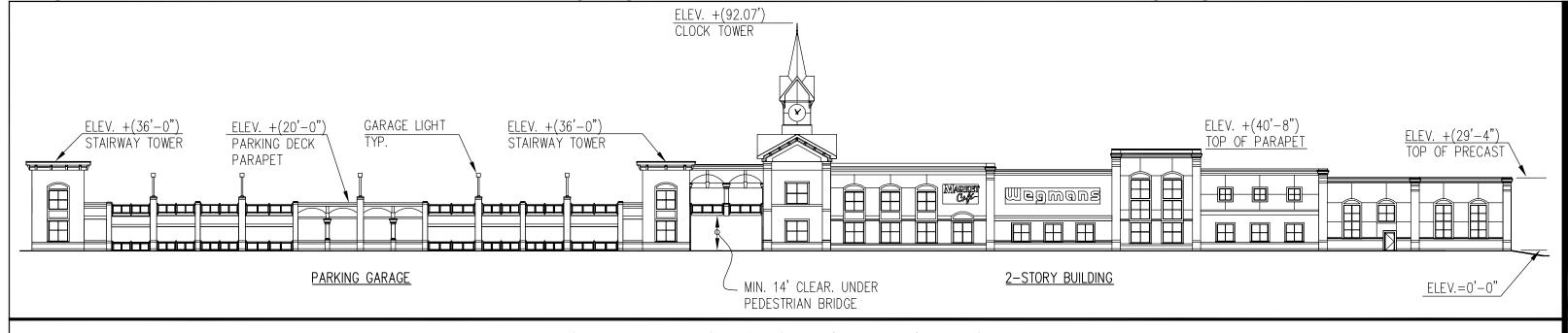
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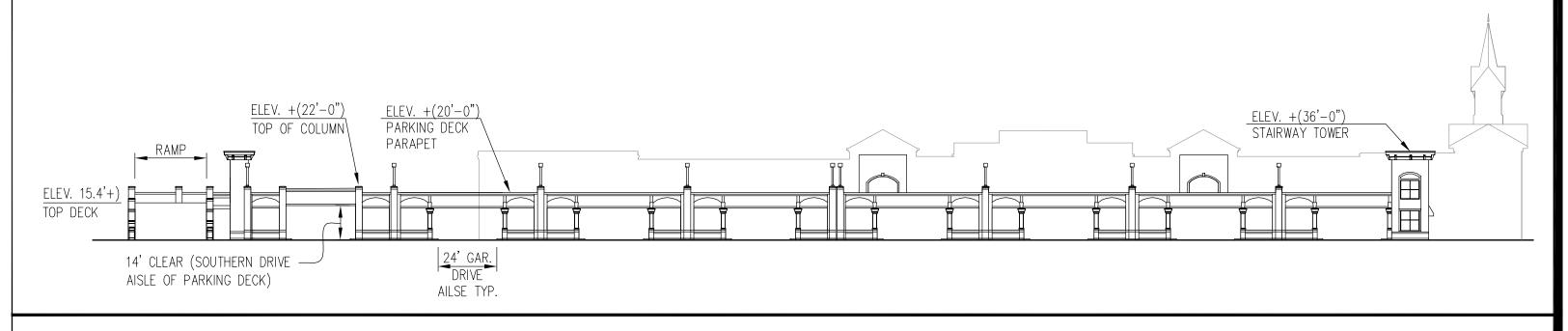
Marshe S. M-Laughtin Marsha S. McLaughlin, Director

Department of Planning and Zoning

Please note that this file is available for public review at the Department of Planning and Zoning's public service counter, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



NORTH ELEVATION (FRONTAGE on McGAW ROAD)



EAST ELEVATION (FRONTAGE on SNOWDEN RIVER PARKWAY)

